LIST OF CLAIMS, SHOWING THE STATUS OF EACH CLAIM

In the following Claims, underlining denotes added text, while strikethrough denotes deleted text.

Claims 1-47. (Cancelled)

48. (Currently Amended) A method of obtaining a non-reverting mutant alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* strain wherein said alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* strain is ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* novo species PB92 or the derivative PBT 110, having a reduced level of a indigenous wild-type high alkaline serine protease, said method comprising the steps of:

a) transforming an alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* PB92 or PBT100 strain comprising an indigenous gene encoding the indigenous wild-type alkaline serine protease with a cloning vector comprising DNA encoding a replication function and 5' and 3' flanking non-coding regions of said gene encoding the wild-type indigenous PB92 or PBT100 high alkaline serine protease but not the coding region of said gene encoding the wild-type indigenous PB92 or PBT100 high alkaline serine protease gene, wherein a sufficient amount of said 5' and 3' flanking non-coding regions is present to provide for homologous recombination with the indigenous gene encoding the indigenous PB92 or PBT100 wild-type alkaline serine protease of said alkalophilic *Bacillus* PB92 or PBT100 ~~Bacillus~~ strain whereby transformants having an inactivated indigenous wild-type ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* PB92 or PBT100 extracellular serine protease are obtained;

b) growing said transformants under conditions whereby the replication function encoded by said cloning vector is inactivated; and

~~and~~

c) isolating transformants having a reduced level of the indigenous PB92 or PBT100 wild-type alkaline serine protease, wherein the level of indigenous PB92 or PBT100 wild-type alkaline serine protease is not detectable.

49. (Cancelled)

50. (Currently Amended) A mutant, non-reverting alkalophilic Bacillus strain wherein said mutant alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* strain is ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* novo species PB92 or the derivative PBT 110, producing a mutant high alkaline serine protease and no detectable level of a wild-type high alkaline serine protease, wherein said mutant, non-reverting alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* PB92 or PBT100 strain is obtained by growing an alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* PB92 or PBT100 strain which comprises an inactivated wild-type serine protease gene, such that said ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* PB92 or PBT100 strain is incapable of producing said wild-type high alkaline serine protease, and wherein said ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* PB92 or PBT100 strain is transformed with a plasmid expression vector comprising said mutant high alkaline serine protease gene, and further wherein said gene encoding the mutant high alkaline serine protease comprises a replacement of at least one amino acid residue in the nucleotide sequence encoding the wild type high alkaline serine protease of ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* novo species PB92 or said PBT 100 derivative thereof, and wherein said replacement is at an amino acid residue position selected from the group consisting of positions 160, 216, and 212 in the nucleotide sequence encoding the wild-type high alkaline serine protease of *Bacillus* novo species PB 92, and wherein the substitutions are selected from the group consisting of M216Q, S160D, and N212D.

51. (Cancelled)

52. (Cancelled)

53. (Currently Amended) The alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* PB92 or PBT100 strain of Claim 50 wherein said strain is asporogenic.

54. (Currently Amended) A method for the production of a mutant high alkaline protease, said method comprising the steps of:

a) obtaining an alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* host selected from the group consisting of ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* novo species PB92 and its derivatives PBT110, wherein said derivatives retains the characteristics of ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* novo species

PB92 and said alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* host PB92 or PBT100 is incapable of producing a wild-type high alkaline serine protease, and comprises a chromosomal deletion of the gene encoding an the wild-type high alkaline serine protease;

b) transforming said alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* host PB92 or PBT100 with an integration cassette comprising a gene encoding a mutant PB92 or PBT100 high alkaline serine protease, wherein said gene encoding the mutant PB92 or PBT100 high alkaline serine protease comprises a replacement of at least one amino acid residue in the nucleotide sequence encoding the wild type high alkaline serine protease of ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* novo species PB92 or its PBT100 derivative ~~thereof~~, to obtain a non-reverting mutant alkalophilic strain, such that said alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* host produces no detectable level of wild-type PB92 or PBT100 serine protease activity, and wherein said replacement is at an amino acid residue position selected from the group consisting of positions 160, 216, and 212 in the nucleotide sequence encoding the wild-type high alkaline serine protease of *Bacillus* novo species PB 92, and wherein the substitutions are selected from the group consisting of M216Q, S160D, and N212D; and

c) growing said mutant alkalophilic ~~Bacillus~~ *Bacillus* host PB92 or PBT100 under conditions whereby said mutant high alkaline serine protease is expressed.

55. (Cancelled)